

Section C – Argument and persuasive language

Instructions for Section C

Section C requires students to write an analysis of the ways in which argument and language are used to persuade others to share a point(s) of view. Read the background information on this page and the material on pages 12 and 13, and write an analytical response to the task below. For the purposes of this task, the term 'language' refers to written, spoken and visual language. Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on the last page of this book. Section C is worth one-third of the total marks for the examination

Task: Write an analysis of the ways in which argument and written and visual language are used in the material on the **next pages** to try to persuade others to share the points of view presented.

Background Information

A new social media trend has emerged, which involves inexperienced tourists entering prohibited areas of national parks and other natural sites, in order to take 'selfies' (i.e., a self-portrait photograph, typically taken with a smartphone). Environmental researcher, Samuel Cornell, has written the following article for an Australian newspaper in response to this trend.

Trampling plants, damaging rock art, risking your life: taking selfies in nature has a cost

Samuel Cornell

In the age of the selfie, taking photos of yourself has become an everyday occurrence. Half of all teenagers regularly post selfies. Driven by social media algorithms, many of us now flock to natural places for the best selfie background. But what happens when our pursuit of the perfect selfie starts damaging nature – or even ourselves? Many people have been severely injured or killed by taking risky selfies and photos in dangerous locations. Indian researchers catalogued 259 selfie-related deaths worldwide as of 2018.



The unwavering pursuit of the flawless selfie also harbours the potential to inflict harm on unsuspecting habitants of the natural world. Animals like quokkas, crayfish, and glow-worms find themselves at risk. Similarly, protected plant species and the irreplaceable rock art of First Nations people are not immune to the perils posed by selfies. In an alarming twist, selfies have even emerged as an unforeseen biosecurity threat.

Spare a thought for our land managers, tasked with caring for the natural places sometimes despoiled for a photo and emergency workers entrusted with rescuing selfie-seekers. As our new research has found, Australia's land managers are often at their wit's end trying to keep people safe in nature.

The problem? Fences and warning signs don't work well. Hardcore selfie-seekers jump the fence and perch on the edge of the cliff to get the shot. We may well need selfie educational campaigns.

Selfies make a new brand of tourist



Social media tourism is drastically changing who and how many of us go to places such as Figure Eight Pools in Sydney's Royal National Park or Josephine Falls not far from Cairns.

As one land manager told us:

"We noticed a massive increase in the number of people, and the kind of visitor that we were getting. We're getting a lot more people who are maybe urban based, didn't spend a lot of time in national parks, weren't particularly familiar with the concept of bush-walking"

Land managers told us these new kinds of tourists were motivated to seek out photos and selfies. The problem was, many were willing to ignore warning signs or bans on drones to get their photos.

"You know, it's all just to get that photo, really. That's it. People definitely, more so now than ever, I think, are coming for the photo. They're not coming for a bush-walk and to look around at the trees and to experience nature."

The advent of selfies has ushered in a novel brand of tourists who fervently embark on journeys to social media stardom. Social media-driven tourism is reshaping the landscape of who visits these natural wonders and how they do so. Land managers have taken note of a substantial influx of visitors, bringing with them a noticeable shift in the demographic profile of tourists. Urban dwellers, unacquainted with the intricacies of national parks and the art of bushwalking, are now the new normal.

These contemporary tourists are primarily driven by the allure of capturing photos and selfies in picturesque locales. The crux of the issue lies in the fact that many are willing to disregard warning signs or flout bans on drone usage to realise their photographic aspirations. Their primary focus is the photograph itself, with little interest in the immersive experience of a leisurely bush-walk or the serene contemplation of nature's wonders.

The challenge is the damage to the environment. Plants get trampled, wildlife disturbed, and in some cases, delicate ecosystems suffer long-term damage. Someone goes swimming, puts it on social media and suddenly there's 100 people a day coming to go wild swimming where the platypus and the glow-worms live. And in a wet year, suddenly all the vegetation around the rock pool is trampled, it turns into a muddy mess. Mainstream tourism bodies can make the problem worse by promoting social media hotspot locations.

"I was horrified the other day noticing promotions for these Figure Eight pools. I just thought, "You've gotta be kidding me. How many times have we told the tourism industry to stop it?" - Land Manager

For other land managers, the challenge lies in the environmental degradation caused by the influx of selfie-seeking visitors. Plants are trampled, wildlife is disturbed, and, in certain instances, the delicate balance of ecosystems is irreparably disrupted. The ramifications are all too evident. A single individual's social media post depicting a refreshing swim can swiftly transform into a daily deluge of a hundred visitors, all eager to replicate the experience. In seasons of heavy rainfall, vegetation surrounding rock pools, which serve as habitats for platypuses and glow-worms, often succumbs to extensive trampling, leaving behind a quagmire of mud.

Safe selfies?



Perhaps the thorniest challenge for land managers is accommodating increased interest while keeping people safe. That's because selfie-seekers sometimes deliberately avoid safety measures like fences.

Land managers are working to assist this new demand by reshaping nature to make better scenery – and keep visitors safer. At Moran Falls in Queensland's Lamington National Park, a famous view across the gorge had been obscured by vegetation. That drove some visitors to jump the fence at the viewing platform and stand directly on top of a very tall cliff.

As a solution, land managers got an arborist to trim the trees blocking the view and then use the fallen limbs to hide the goat track made by selfie-seekers. Nevertheless, a lingering question persists: Why do conventional interventions such as signs and warnings consistently fall short? The answer may be found in the realm of social validation. For many, the allure of receiving social media recognition eclipses the perceived risk associated with their actions. The prospect of garnering admiration and validation on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok serves as a powerful motivator, compelling individuals to explore new locations and undertake audacious feats.